

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The office action dated October 17, 2003 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1-38 remain in the application.

In the Office Action, claims 1-5, 7, 11, 14, 17-33, and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Applicant's related art disclosed in the patent application (hereinafter "ARA") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,344,883 to Yamada (hereinafter "Yamada"). Claims 6, 8-10, 34, and 36-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the ARA in view of Yamada and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,061,117 to Horie (hereinafter "Horie"). Claims 12, 13, 15, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the ARA in view of Yamada and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,963,290 to Murai et al. (hereinafter "Murai")

The rejection of claims 1, 12, 13, 15, and 16 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Claims 1, 12, 13, 15, and 16 are allowable over the cited references in that each of these claims recites a combination of elements including, for example, "a dielectric frame in a region other than a region where said pixel electrode is formed." None of the cited references including the ARA and Yamada, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention. For example, in Yamada as shown in FIGs. 10A-10D, a convex portion 36 corresponding to the dielectric frame of the current invention is formed on a transparent electrode 31. Also, FIGs. 10A-10D show a transparent electrode 33 that overlaps the convex portion 36. One of these electrodes functions as a pixel electrode. In either case the convex portion 36 is in the same region as the pixel electrode. The examiner in response to Applicant's argument states: "However, it is clear from the text of Yamada that the frames (convex portions, 36) surround the pixel area." (See page 14 of the Office Action.) The pixel electrode in Yamada, either 31 or 33, covers an area greater than the pixel region (area). As shown in FIG. 10C the pixel region is bounded by the convex portion 36. But, in FIG. 10A the pixel electrode is clearly shown extending beyond the pixel region as defined by the convex portions, and thus the convex portions are in the same region as the pixel

electrode. Such configuration is directly contrary to the assertion made in the Office Action and clearly does not anticipate the recited elements. Nothing else in the cited references teaches or suggests the recited features. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 12, 13, 15, and 16 and claims 2-11, 14, and 17-29, which depend from claim 1, are allowable over the cited references.

Further the Examiner states: “Yamada is evidence that ordinary workers in the art of liquid crystals would find the reason, suggestion, or motivation to add a dielectric frame of the LCD of APA to avoid a rough display in gray scales (col. 13, lines 36-46).” The present invention seeks to overcome problems with the long time it takes to stabilize the liquid crystal in the related art multi-domain LCDs. (See specification page 3, last two paragraphs.) The problems sought to be solved by Yamada and the present invention are completely different, so there is no motivation or suggestion in either Yamada or the ARA to combine these references.

The rejection of claim 30 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Claim 30 is allowable over the cited references in that this claim recites a combination of elements including, for example, “a dielectric frame surrounding said pixel region, said dielectric frame distorting electric field applied to said liquid crystal layer and said dielectric frame in a region other than a region where said pixel electrode is formed.” None of the cited references including the related art and Yamada, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention. The arguments stated above for claim 1 also apply in relation to claim 30. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 30 and claims 31-38, which depend from claim 30, are allowable over the cited references.

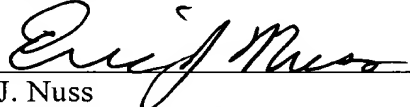
Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited. If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37

C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Dated: January 20, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

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